

In the Claims:

Claims 1-39 (cancelled).

40. (currently amended) Scaffold coupling apparatus for tubular scaffold elements comprising a ~~first~~ scaffold, a bolt, first and second braces attachable around the scaffold and pivotable around the bolt, the first brace comprising a fork-shaped free end-piece and the second brace comprising a bell-shaped projection, a fastener for positioning in the bell-shaped projection and pivotably locating in the fork-shaped free end-piece for tightening the first and second braces, the fastener comprising a shaft including a T-shaped head on one end and a threaded portion on an opposite end, the T-shaped head of the fastener being locatable in the bell-shaped projection of the second brace, with the bell-shaped projection limiting a pivotal motion of the fastener, contact surfaces on the T-shaped head, complementary contact surfaces in the bell-shaped projection for snugly fitting the T-shaped head in the bell-shaped projection, and a nut disposed on the threaded portion of the shaft for tightening the fastener after insertion of the shaft in the fork-shaped end-piece thereby tightening the first and second braces around a the scaffold without turning the T-shaped head in the bell-shaped projection and preventing jamming of the T-shaped head in the bell-shaped projection.

41. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein the T-shaped head comprises a wedge-shape for fitting into the bell-shaped projection, wherein the contact surfaces of

the T-shaped head and the bell-shaped projection have complementary shapes for preventing a turning motion of the T-shaped head inside the bell-shaped projection.

42. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 41, wherein the T-shaped head further comprises free ends, and wherein the complementary portions of the bell-shaped projection are inter-fitting portions complementary to the free ends of the T-shaped head.

43. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 42, wherein the free ends of the T-shaped head comprise a top surface, side surfaces and bottom surfaces.

44. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the top surface is substantially a vertical bevelled surface, the side surfaces are substantially ~~short flat bevels~~ bevelled surfaces on the T-shaped head away from the shaft, and the bottom surfaces are substantially longitudinal ~~bevels~~ bevelled surfaces extending towards the shaft.

45. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 42, wherein the shaft comprises contact areas along the T-shaped head.

46. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the contact areas are on a base of the shaft and are vertical and complementary to the contact surfaces on the free ends of the T-shaped head, and wherein the contact areas extend vertically towards a longitudinal extension of the T-shaped head.

47. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 46,

wherein the contact areas comprise bevelled limiting edges widening towards the threads.

48. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 46, wherein the contact surfaces ~~at the free ends~~ of the T-shaped head and contact areas on the base of the shaft have complementary shapes. 7

49. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 46, wherein the contact areas on the base of the shaft extend to the fork-shaped free end-piece after insertion.

50. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 42, wherein the free ends of the T-shaped head comprise slightly flattened supporting surfaces on a side facing the bell-shaped projection.

51. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 42, wherein the free ends of the T-shaped head and the bell-shaped projection have complementary shapes with corresponding contact and support surfaces respectively.

52. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 51, wherein the free ends of the T-shaped head comprise a glide enhancing coating along the contact and support surfaces.

53. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein the T-shaped head are of a material softer than a material of the braces.

54. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 42, wherein the ends of the T-shaped head are of a material softer than a material of the braces.

55. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 43, further comprising an indentation on the top surface of the T-shaped head

corresponding to a shape of the ~~first~~ scaffold.

56. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein the T-shaped head comprises a contact surface having a V-shaped expansion proximal the shaft and extending up to a middle of the T-shaped head.

57. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 42, wherein the bell-shaped projection comprises portions on a lowest point for fitting on the T-shaped head and further comprises contact surfaces for preventing turning or jamming of the T-shaped head during tightening of the fastener.

58. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein the contact surfaces comprise shaped portions for enclosing the free ends of the T-shaped head and arched surfaces in between the free ends.

59. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein portions of the contact surfaces on the bell-shaped projection are disposed proximal to the lowest point and wherein the portions near the lowest point have thicknesses complementary to thicknesses of the T-shaped head.

60. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 40, further comprising ~~a second scaffold and~~ a third brace having a closing mechanism, wherein the scaffold comprises first and second scaffolds, wherein the third brace is connected to the first and second braces, and wherein the third brace holds the second scaffold.